



21 March 2017

C83639

Emmy Rākete
fyi-request-5394-4d5efcb2@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Rākete

Thank you for your email of 20 February 2017 requesting information about the wages of Ministerial Services staff. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

The Department receives a large volume of information requests and correspondence which requires a specialist team that operates as an interface between the Minister of Corrections and the public. We operate a centralised team – Ministerial Services – who are responsible for supporting the Minister and the Department by processing, preparing and writing responses to information requests such as parliamentary questions, OIA requests and ministerial correspondence.

You have asked for the following information:

- 1. Please provide the median wage of the employees whose task it would be to undertake this collating and editing.*
- 2. Please provide the highest and lowest wages paid to employees whose task it would be to undertake this collating and editing.*

You have requested the Department release the details of individuals' salary. The Department is statutorily obliged to protect all private information that we hold, including that of staff. We are unable to release the details you have requested as doing so would contravene our obligations under the OIA and the Privacy Act. Therefore, your request is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

As per section 9(1) of the OIA, we have also considered whether there are countervailing public interest considerations favouring the release of the requested information. We do not believe such considerations are present in this case.

However, we can offer the following information which may assist your understanding.

The Department's annual report, provided in the link below, shows the operating costs for the Ministerial Services team.

http://public2013.corrections.govt.nz/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/857737/Annual_report_201516.pdf

The expenditure of the Ministerial Services team for the 2015/16 financial year was \$1,341,000.00, the majority of which is attributed to personnel costs. There were 12 full-time equivalent staff in the Ministerial Services team in 2015/16. A further five staff members were required during this period in response to a significant increase in requests. Their salaries are also included in the above figure.

- 3. Please provide an estimate of the actual dollar amount of the cost to Corrections staff in lost staff time for undertaking the collation and editing of the requested reports.*

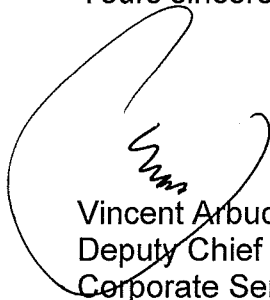
The Department considers that it has already provided this information. In calculating the charge for processing the requested reports, the Department has adhered to the charging guidelines provided by the Office of the Ombudsman. These guidelines are considered to represent a sufficiently accurate estimate of staff costs.

For clarity, the charge was based on the following: The Department estimated that collation and editing of the sections requested from 44 Crime of Torture Act (COTA) reports, including departmental consultation would equate to three hours of labour, per report. Based on this, the Department estimated the request would require 132 hours of staff time.

Guidelines produced by the Office of the Ombudsman indicate a reasonable chargeable cost of \$38.00 per half-hour of staff time in excess of one hour's labour. Accordingly, the Department advised that the requested information could be provided at a cost of \$9,956.00. This represents 131 hours of staff time (132 minus one) x \$76.00.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with the Department. Alternatively you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely



Vincent Arbuckle
Deputy Chief Executive
Corporate Services